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14. ABSTRACT

Since the end of the Cold War the world has experienced an increase in the number of intra-state conflicts and humanitarian crises. Genocides have caused the deaths of innocent thousands while the United Nations and the international community struggled to muster a response. This delay in action has been primarily due to a lack of sufficient political will for intervention by Member states and difficulties in recruiting peacekeeping forces by the UN. Furthermore, peace operations have shifted significantly from traditional peacekeeping to peace enforcement missions where the use of force is authorized and expected. A rapid reaction force accessible by the UN would alleviate most challenges of recruitment and political will. Some argue that a standing peacekeeping force is the best option to the UN for rapid reaction capability. It is the thesis of this paper that a standing peacekeeping force is not the optimal method for quick reaction, but rather the UN utilization of standby regional organizations around the globe. This paper explains why the need exists for a military force capable of rapid reaction, why a standing army is not the best method of providing that capability based on its limitations and constraints and why standby regional organizations offer increased benefits in fulfilling this role. Finally, the paper recommends improvements to the UN's current Standby Arrangement System and encourages international support to the further development and training of military forces from regional organizations.

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Standing or Standby? Is a Standing Peacekeeping Force the Best Option for the United Nations?

By

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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10 May 2007

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Standing or Standby? Is a Standing Peacekeeping Force the Best Option for the United Nations?

Since the end of the Cold War the world has experienced an increase in the number of intra-state conflicts and humanitarian crises. Genocides have caused the deaths of innocent thousands while the United Nations and the international community struggled to muster a response. This delay in action has been primarily due to a lack of sufficient political will for intervention by Member states and difficulties in recruiting peacekeeping forces by the UN. Furthermore, peace operations have shifted significantly from traditional peacekeeping to peace enforcement missions where the use of force is authorized and expected. A rapid reaction force accessible by the UN would alleviate most challenges of recruitment and political will. Some argue that a standing peacekeeping force is the best option to the UN for rapid reaction capability. It is the thesis of this paper that a standing peacekeeping force is not the optimal method for quick reaction, but rather the UN utilization of standby regional organizations around the globe. This paper explains why the need exists for a military force capable of rapid reaction, why a standing army is not the best method of providing that capability based on its limitations and constraints and why standby regional organizations offer increased benefits in fulfilling this role. Finally, the paper recommends improvements to the UN's current Standby Arrangement System and encourages international support to the further development and training of military forces from regional organizations.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the Cold War the world has experienced an increase in the number of intra-state conflicts and humanitarian crises. Genocides in such places as Rwanda have led to the death of innocent thousands while the United Nations (UN) and the international community struggled to muster a response. This delay in action has been primarily due to difficulties in recruiting peacekeeping forces and lack of sufficient political will on behalf of Member states. Furthermore, peace operations have shifted significantly from traditional peacekeeping to peace enforcement missions where the use of force is authorized and expected.

Worldwide benefit would thus be gained if the UN could easily access a military force that was capable of reacting rapidly or even preemptively to a wide range of crises where peace operations were required. Some argue that the development of a UN standing army is the best option for achieving and maintaining international peace and security considering the difficulties briefly mentioned above. It is the thesis of this paper, however, that UN utilization of standby military forces from regional organizations around the globe is preferable to a standing army once issues such as cost, legitimacy, and political will have been considered.

BACKGROUND

Even before the official establishment of the United Nations in 1945, an argument began regarding how this new globally oriented organization would maintain international peace and security. British Prime Minister Churchill, among others, supported a regional

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approach.[1] In 1948 Trygve Lie, the first UN secretary general, instead proposed a standing

UN force of 5,000 that would be under secretary-general and Security Council control.[2]

Statements made within months of each other indicated that President H.W. Bush opposed a

standing army while former President Reagan embraced the idea, calling for "a standing UN

force—an army of conscience – equipped and prepared to carve out humanitarian sanctuaries

through force if necessary."[3] In the summer of 1994, a commission that included former

President Ford, Helmut Schmidt, and Mikhail Gorbachev recommended consideration of

"the creation of a modest size standing force of volunteers under UN auspices…backed up by

regional or sub-regional peace-keeping forces."[4] More recently, Presidents Clinton and G.W.

Bush have both supported the regional approach to peace operations. While much debate

continues regarding exactly what force will provide peace, it is agreed that a rapid reaction

force is necessary to quell crises on an international scale.

   The case of Rwanda's genocide in 1994 perhaps best exemplifies how the UN's lack of

accessibility to a dedicated, rapid reaction force contributed to the deaths of thousands of

innocent people. Initial fighting between the Hutu government of Rwanda and the Tutsi-led

Rwandese Patriotic Front began in the fall of 1990. UN involvement in the situation did not

begin until June 1993 with the establishment of United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-

Rwanda (UNOMUR) in Uganda. In October of the same year, United Nations Assistance

Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) was established. However, initial UN solicitation for troop

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[1] Alex J. Bellamy, Paul Williams, and Stuart Griffin, *Understanding Peacekeeping* (Cambridge: Polity, 2004), 212.
[2] Lukas Haynes and Timothy W. Stanley, "To Create a United Nations Fire Brigade," *Comparative Strategy* 14, (1995): 9.
[3] Edmund J. Hull, "UN Peacekeeping Operations: Worthwhile Investments in Peace," *USIA Electronic Journal* 3, no. 2 (April 1998), 2.
http://uninfo.state.gov/journals/itps/0498/ijpe/pj28hull.htm/ (accessed 03 May 2007).
[4] Haynes and Stanley, "Create a UN Fire Brigade," 9.

contributions from its member states in support of UNAMIR yielded only 400 troops from Belgium.[5] By April 1994 the mass murders in Rwanda began to gain international attention. Only one month later between 250,000 to 500,000 Rwandans had been killed with an estimated 1.5 million Rwandans displaced.[6] On 17 May 1994, UN resolution 918 called for the increase in peacekeeping troops to 5,500 personnel, but UNAMIR forces still numbered a meager 503 total personnel by the middle of June. Ultimately, it took nearly six months for UN Member states to provide the required number of troops for the operation.[7] The French did intervene in early July with 2,500 troops, and are estimated to have saved over 15,000 Tutsis, but for the UN it was too little, too late.[8] Close to one million Rwandans are estimated to have lost their lives in the genocide.[9] A 1999 independent inquiry, commissioned by the UN Secretary-General, found that a "lack of resources and political will" were to blame for the UN and international community's response to the situation.[10] One cannot help but one wonder how many Rwandan lives would have been saved if a trained, rapid-reaction force had been readily available for employment by the UN.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Suppose for a moment that a standing force was the best option available to the UN. What would be its size and composition and what considerations or constraints would be of note?

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[5] United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping, "International Tribunal for Rwanda," 1999, http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/co_mission/unamirS.htm (accessed 16 April 2007).
[6] Simon Chesterman, *Just War or Just Peace?: Humanitarian Intervention and International Law* (NY, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001, 144-145.
[7] United Nations, "International Tribunal for Rwanda," 2.
[8] William Shawcross, *Deliver us from Evil* (NY, NY: Simon and Schuster, 2000), 140-141.
[9] Shawcross, *Deliver us from Evil,* 144.
[10]United Nations, "International Tribunal for Rwanda," 3.

As mentioned above, Secretary General Lie's proposal in 1948 was for a standing UN force with a strength of 5,000 personnel. Throughout the years, other proposals have ranged anywhere from 50,000 to 500,000.[11] As recently as 2006, proponents of a UN Army called for a rapid reaction force of 15,000 which would include military, police and civilians that could be deployed within 48 hours anywhere in the world.[12]

As a gauge of appropriate size for such a force, it is useful to consider the total number of forces currently engaged worldwide in peace operations. As of this writing, that number is approximately 280,000– of which just over 80,000 are wearing the blue helmet of the UN.[13] It is necesssary, then, that a single standing force would need to be of significant size to alone cover the numerous conflicts worldwide.

One estimate projects a startup cost of $2 billion for a 15,000 person force with an estimated annual cost of $900 million.[14] A Netherlands proposal in 1997 conservatively estimated the annual cost for a light infantry brigade sized force to be $300 million annually.[15] A force of only 15,000 might be less expensive, but would not be sufficient to cover simultaneous conflicts and ultimately would rely on national or regional standby forces to assist. Conversely, a force of adequate size (280,000+) would be cost prohibitive to an organization that is already financially lacking. As of 31 March 2007, the approved UN

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[11] Haynes and Stanley, "Create a UN Fire Brigade," 9.
[12] Olivia Ward, "United Nations 'Army' Proposed," *Toronto Star,* 15 June 2006, http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/peacekpg/reform/2006/0615army.htm/ (accessed 27 March 2007).
[13] United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping, "United Nations Peacekeeping Operations," 31 March 2007, http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/bnote.htm/ (accessed 03 May 2007).
[14] Peter J. Smith, "Proposal for UN Standing Army Would See UN Trumping Security Council," *LifeSiteNews.com,* 20 June 2006, http://www.lifesite.net/Idn/2006/jun/06061612.html/ (accessed 01 May 2007).
[15] Frederick Bonnart. "It's Time for a Standing UN Rapid Reaction Force," International *Herald Tribune,* 22 January 1997, http://www.int.com/ (accessed 03 May 2007).

budget for peace operations from 01 July 2006 to 30 June 2007 is $5.28 billion.[16] However, as of 31 January 2006 outstanding Member State contributions to peacekeeping totaled approximately $3.27 billion.[17]

Any increase in spending by the UN would be felt most heavily by its largest financial contributors. Specifically, the United States— the largest contributor financially to the United Nations with an annual assessment rate of 22%[18] — would not likely be willing or able to contribute considerably more financially.

Assuming for the moment that funds were readily available to the UN for a large standing force, from whence would come the personnel to fill its ranks? No US President has ever relinquished command authority over US forces. While operational control of US forces has from time to time been given, it has always been for a specified mission or amount of time.[19] Even if this restriction were not in place, a force deployment situation like the current one to Iraq and Afghanistan would make it highly unlikely that the United States or other participating Member states would have additional forces available to hand over to the UN. Small or developing nations may not have available forces due to their minimal military size overall or, in the case of a developing country, the caliber of troops might not be of the level required. Finally, the US and other nations would not be anxious to involve their troops in conflicts that did not serve their national interests.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18]"US Contributions to the UN," *Betterworldcampaign.org,* http://www.betterworldcampaign.org/about_the_un/US_dues.asp/ (accessed 04 May 2007).

[19] *Clinton Administration Policy on Reforming Multi-lateral Peace Operations, Presidential Decision Directive/PDD-25,* 22 February 1996, http://www.fas.org.irp.offdocs/pdd25.htm/ (accessed 27 March 2007).

Supposing the UN could muster an adequately sized and financially backed standing force, the issues of ownership and employment of this force must be addressed.

Conceivably, this standing force would be under the control of the UN Secretary General and the authority and direction of the Security Council. The composition of the security council with five permanent members— the United States, Britain, Russia, China, and France—and the veto power given to each[20] allow the security council to "project the power of the United Nations or tie its hands."[21] One must consider what this would mean for deployment of a UN-owned standing force. Two extremes in deployments are possible, with corresponding associated dangers. At one end of the spectrum, it is possible that veto power would be exercised for one reason or another by any permanent member of the Security Council. A case in point is China's veto on renewal of Macedonia's United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP). China held that UNRPEDEP was no longer needed. However, there is much speculation that China's veto was due instead to Macedonia's diplomatic recognition of Taiwan.[22] Vetoes like this against the commitment of the standing force to conflicts would defy the very purpose of the force to halt violence and prevent threats to international peace and security.

At the other end of the spectrum is the prospect that the Security Council, with access to a standing force, would approve too many deployments and this UN force would become overextended and ineffective. Overextension is a very real possibility when one considers that since the late 80s to early 90s, the UN has seen a surge in demand in for peacekeeping operations. In the forty years between its establishment and 1988 the UN was involved in

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[20] Shawcross, "Deliver us from evil", 35.
[21] Ibid., 35.
[22] Mayura Kiowai, "Veto Ends UN Mission in Macedonia," *Peacekeeping and International Relations* 28, Issue 2 (Mar/Apr 1999): 11.

only thirteen missions total.[23] However, during the mid to late 90s the number of annual UN peacekeeping operations reached twenty several times[24] while today the UN is committed to fifteen missions simultaneously.[25]

The end of the Cold War brought about not only a rise in the number of conflicts, but also a change in the character of peacekeeping operations. As discussed in his book *The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping*, William Durch labels the vast majority of missions between 1948 and 1988 as 'traditional' peacekeeping missions.[26] Consistent with Chapter VI of the UN Charter, these were relatively low risk missions, conducted with the consent of the nation(s) involved and entailed such activities as truce and border monitoring. The use of force was not authorized or expected with the exception of self defense. Conversely, the preponderance of UN missions since 1988 have been termed peace enforcement missions. These types of operations involve the use of force for other than self defense and are governed by Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Peace enforcement missions do not require consent of the parties involved, imply a higher risk of casualties than traditional peacekeeping missions and thus require a more highly trained, effective fighting force.

The UN purports to be neutral and impartial and only authorizes the use of force when all "peaceful" means have failed. When Chapter VII operations are approved by the Security Council, the UN authorizes a recruited force from outside of its employed peacekeepers to carry out the mandate. This helps to ensure that impartiality of the blue helmeted UN forces is maintained. The employment of a UN standing army for chapter VII operations would

[23] William J. Durch, *The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping*, (NY, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 9.
[24] United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping, *List of Operations, 1948*-2007, http://www.un.org/depts/dpko/list/list.pdf/ (accessed 03 May 2007)
[25] United Nations, "United Nations Peacekeeping Operations."
[26] Durch, *Evolution of Peacekeeping,* 18.

require a shift in the mindset of the international community and the UN organization and would necessitate a change to the UN charter.

In his 1992 *Agenda for Peace,* Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali stated that the capability to militarily enforce the charter's principles "is essential to the credibility of the United Nations as a guarantor of international security."[27] Ironically, the UN's lack of credibility is a major impediment to international approval of a UN standing force. It seems the argument is a circular one in that the United Nations does not currently have legitimacy in the eyes of world opinion, but might gain it if it had a credible, professional effective military of its own. However, that military would not have credibility because of its owner, and so forth. Finally, there exist many critical capabilities a standing UN force would need to develop, just as any professional, successful military force. Robust command and control, effective and trained joint doctrine, interoperability, etc. are all issues that might be overcome with professional personnel, training, experience over time and, most importantly, money. Considering the need for a quick reaction force in these times of reduced resources, however, standby forces provide a more cost efficient, effective alternative to a standing army.

STANDBY ARRANGEMENT SYSTEM

In Section VII of *An Agenda for Peace*, Boutros-Ghali expresses his desire for more robust cooperation between the UN and regional organizations. He states that "in this new era of opportunity, regional arrangements or agencies can render great service if their activities are undertaken in a manner consistent with the purposes and principles of the (UN) Charter, and if their relationship with the United Nations, and particularly the Security

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[27] United Nations, Secretary-General, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-keeping, Report of the Secretary-General*, A/47/277-S/24111 (New York: UN, 1992), http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/agpeace.html/ (accessed 03 May 2007).

Council, is governed by Chapter VIII…"[28] Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, entitled

"Regional Arrangements," delineates the utilization of regional organizations for the "pacific

settlement of local disputes" or for enforcement actions when authorized by the Security

Council.[29]

Based on Boutros-Ghali's 1992 report, the Standby Arrangement System (SAS) was

established by the UN in 1993[30] as a means of reducing the time for recruitment and

deployment of a nation's forces after the Security Council authorizes a mission.[31] Based on

pledges by member states to contribute specific resources within a specified response time,

SAS not only allows the UN a rapid deployment capability, it also ensures the UN a precise

understanding of the forces and capabilities a Member State is willing to contribute. This

arrangement hypothetically allows for realistic operational planning by the UN.

Four levels of commitment exist between Member states and the UN in the SAS. Three

conventional levels range from level one, which requires member states to provide a

capabilities listing, to level three whereby a memorandum of understanding (MOU) is signed

specifying resources, response times and conditions for employment. Member states which

pledge resources on the fourth level, or Rapid Deployment Level (RDL), agree to have forces

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[28] United Nations, *Agenda for Peace,* 63.

[29] United Nations, General Assembly, *The Charter of the United Nations* (New York: UN, 1945), http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/ (accessed 08 April 2007).

[30] H. Peter Langille, "Conflict Prevention: Options for Rapid Deployment and UN Standing Forces," http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/peacekpg/reform/canada2.htm/ (accessed 27 March 2007), 8.

[31] United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping, *United Nations Stand-By Arrangement System Militar*y *Handbook,* Edition 2003 (New York: UN, 2003), http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/milad/fgs2/unsas_files/rapid_deployment/torrdl.htm/ (accessed 29 March 2007).

deployed with 30/90 days of a Security Council mandate.[32] As of April 2005, eighty-three

Member states had enrolled in the program, with 50 countries having signed MOUs.[33]

From a cost perspective, the SAS is beneficial to the UN, as payment is only made to the

contributing Member State if its forces are deployed, while the Member State holds

responsibility for payment and training of its forces while on standby status.

A limitation of the SAS is that at all levels final deployment authority is held by the

individual contributing Member State, thus there is no written guarantee that these forces will

be available to the UN when needed. While this system is beneficial for member states, in

that it allows them to retain their forces if desired or needed for domestic use, it does not

effectively provide a committed capability to the UN. The system is attractive in theory, but

has been detrimental —as in the Rwanda case— when Member states do not approve troop

deployment.

Another drawback to the UN SAS is that it is currently mandated only for Chapter VI

operations and does not include the deployment of forces for Chapter VII missions. Future

peacekeeping operations will most likely require Chapter VII mandates, thus a revision to the

UN SAS is urgently needed.

REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Building on the SAS idea, and consistent with Chapter VIII of the UN Charter is the

advancement of organized regional standby forces. Ideally, regional organizations or

alliances would quickly make available to the UN forces with enhanced military capability.

This capability would be based upon the establishment of common doctrine and inter-

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[32] Ibid.

[33] United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping, "Member States in the UNSAS," 15 April 2005, http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/milad/fgs2/unsas_files/status_report15april05.pdf/ (accessed 10 April 2007).

operability through combined training and/or operational experience. The benefits of regional

organizations, however, reach far beyond the provision of a military capability.

Regional forces responding to a crisis in their own "neighborhood" would have the

advantage of geographical proximity, which would be beneficial in several ways. First, a

regional force, acting as a type of "neighborhood watch," would be ideal to serve as the eyes,

ears and conscience of the United Nations in providing insight and a call to action in local

conflicts. Under Article 52 of the UN Charter, regional organizations "shall make every

effort to achieve pacific settlement of local disputes" and may take regional action provided

that the activities are "consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations."[34]

Proximity would allow for preventative measures and the advantage of rapid deployment and

re-supply. Furthermore, inherent familiarity with regional history, geography, culture,

religion and language and sensitivities related to each would presumably make a regional

organization the logical choice for carrying out UN actions. Finally, the political will to halt

violence or stop atrocities would conceivably be greater, as failure to do so may further

regional instability, and thus directly affect one or more of the countries comprising that

regional organization.

Another major advantage of a regional force is its availability for operations when UN

involvement in a conflict is either not possible, i.e. Security Council veto, or not desired by

the involved parties. An addition to the earlier example of China's veto of continued action in

Macedonia, is the example of inaction by the Security Council following the tragic 1993

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[34] United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations.*

events in Mogadishu, Somalia. Fearing another mission failure, the Security Council denied mission requests for deployment of forces to Burundi, Congo-Brazzaville and Liberia.[35]

In 2006 Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir repeatedly rejected the idea of a UN peacekeeping effort in his country, citing a perceived Western threat to his country's sovereignty. In this instance, the UN Security Council was willing to intervene and had passed several resolutions regarding the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS). This intervention included an expansion of the mandate to include 17,300 international military personnel, but President al-Bashir denied their deployment into his country.[36] He instead allowed in only African Union forces under operation African Mission in Sudan (AMIS). Eventually, in late 2006, President al-Bashir did agree to a "hybrid" operation of AU and UN forces although precious time had already been lost for those affected.

Per the UN Charter, regional forces could operate when deemed necessary for international and regional security even in the absence of a UN mandate so long as actions are consistent with the "Purposes and Principles" of the UN Charter. The Charter is not clear about authorized actions for dealing with humanitarian interventions and in the past this has led to regional organizations and alliances conducting operations outside of a UN Security Council mandate. The 1999 NATO air campaign in Kosovo against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in Liberia are two such examples.[37]

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[35] Bellamy, Williams and Griffin, *Understanding Peacekeeping,* 214.
[36] United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping, "UN Pursues Peace in Darfur," 2006, http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/pub/year_review06/darfur.htm/ (accessed 15 April 2007).
[37] Bellamy, Williams and Griffin, *Understanding Peacekeeping*, 219. Simon Chesterman, *Just War or Just Peace?: Humanitarian Intervention and International Law* (NY,NY: Oxford University Press, 2001), 219.

"Dual-use" —meaning a capability for international or regional deployment in addition to use in a regional defense role—is a major advantage of standby regional forces over a standing UN army. Furthermore, the interaction and coordination between nations of a regional organization help to establish a spirit of cooperation and improve regional stability simply by opening the lines of communication within a region. The benefits of this cannot necessarily be quantified, but they are of huge import.

Finally, one of the major benefits of the regional force concept over a standing UN army is that many regional organizations already exist, albeit with differing levels of military capability. NATO is perhaps the most widely recognized regional alliance to have supported UN peacekeeping operations, but there are currently several other regional forces already established or in the process of forming. For the sake of space, only three will be mentioned here, the Stand-by High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG), the South-Eastern Europe Brigade (SEEBRIG), and the African Union.

The Danish-led SHIRBRIG is perhaps the most successful example of a regional organization second only to NATO. Established in 1996, the SHIRBRIG is a collaborative effort among fifteen regular troop contributor and eight observer nations.[38] Each has conditionally agreed to provide the equivalent of an infantry battalion and several officers for the headquarters and planning of the SHIRBRIG operations.[39] SHIRBRIG maintains a unified headquarters and regularly conducts joint operations with contributing countries. Although originally developed to support Chapter VI peacekeeping operations, SHIRBRIG

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[38] Langille, "Conflict Prevention," 2.
[39] H. Peter Langille, "Bridging the Commitment-Capacity Gap," *The Ploughshares Monitor* 23, no. 4 (Winter 2002), http://www.ploughshares.ca/libraries/monitor/mond02g.html/ (accessed 06 May 2007), 4.

will consider Chapter VII operations on a case by case basis.[40] SHIRBRIG has already

shown its reliability for UN operations by its participation in five UN missions between 2000

and 2006, including the UN Mission in Sudan. Additionally, SHIRBRIG personnel are

currently assisting in the development of an African Stand-By force based on their

organization's model.[41]

    The South-Eastern Europe Brigade (SEEBRIG) is another regional force that is gaining

momentum. Established in 1998, SEEBRIG originally represented Albania, Bulgaria,

Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Romania and Turkey, but continues to accept new members.[42]

This brigade is especially critical in its tense, conflicted neighborhood. Based on NATO

procedures, the brigade anticipates a build up to five battalions and would provide an

approximate size of 3,000 infantry soldiers.[43] SEEBRIG has limited its missions to

peacekeeping and humanitarian support, and by current mandate will not participate in peace

enforcement operations, but did deploy to Afghanistan in 2006.[44]

    Considering there are currently six UN missions in Africa employing over 55,000

peacekeepers, regional organizations based in Africa are of critical importance.[45]

Participation by the African Union (AU) in Rwanda and the Sudan as well as by forces

established and led by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is

demonstrative of the African community's willingness to intervene in regional crises. While

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[40] United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping, "SHIRBRIG: Ready to Deploy," 2006, http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/pub/year_review06/shirbrig.htm/ (accessed 15 April 2007).
[41] Ibid.
[42] Elizabeth G. Book, "Multi-national Brigade Set to Deploy to Balkans," *National Defense Magazine* 87, Issue 589, December 2002, http://www.proquest.com/ (accessed 12 April 2007), 2.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Elizabeth G. Book, "Multi-national Brigade Set to Deploy," 2.
[45] United Nations, "United Nations Peacekeeping Operations."

not lacking in political will for intervention, African organizations are extremely limited by training, equipment and logistic capabilities.[46]   The African Capacity for Peace Operations (ACOTA) program was established by the US in 2002 to help African countries "develop and sustain a deployable capacity for peace operations."[47] As of February 2005, ACOTA had helped train over 17,000 African troops from ten countries.[48] ACOTA was absorbed by President George Bush's Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI), which was proposed in 2004. The goal of the GPOI is to train and equip over 50,000 troops in Africa, and another 15,000 in Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean over a five year period at an estimated total cost of $650 million.[49] Through a "train the trainer" concept, this program will build and sustain African response capability and effectiveness.

While the SAS and regional organizations have been shown to have major benefits over a standing UN force, these concepts are not without disadvantages. Specifically, regional organizations may in fact have a perceived lack of impartiality in dealing with conflicts within their respective regions. While these regional forces may be considered to be the "experts" in the language, culture, customs, politics, etc. of their "neighborhood," they may also be too close to the problem to be objective and impartial. Lesser regional nations may perceive these lead countries to be acting only as self serving hegemons. Often, however, the lead countries have achieved such status due to relative superiority in military or economic

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[46] Moira Shanahan and Dara Francis. "U.S. Support to African Capacity for Peace Operations: The ACOTA Program," 2. http://www.stimson.org/fopo/pdf/ACOTA_BriefFinal_Feb05.pdf (accessed 15 March 2007).
[47] Ibid, 1.
[48] Ibid, 3.
[49] Nina M. Serafino, "The Global Peace Operations Initiative: Background and Issues for Congress." 5. http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL32773.pdf (accessed 15 March 2007).

capabilities. Moreover, regional standby organizations, while acting locally or internationally, must abide by the purposes and principles of the UN charter, or risk international action against them.

Not all regional organizations are the same in that some are severely lacking financially and militarily in terms of resources and expertise. SHIRBRIG is comprised of white, wealthy, northern countries, whereas African organizations such as the AU do not enjoy such a wealth base. At a minimum, these deficiencies in some regional forces can lead to a lack of confidence and declining desire for involvement in peace enforcement (Chapter VII) operations involving the use of force in conflicts. Worst case, these deficiencies lead to the deaths of inexperienced and under equipped peacekeepers and mission failure. There is something to be said, however, for the preventative capabilities that a regional organization brings. The "early-warning" potential attributable to geographical proximity would plausibly allow regional forces to quell a situation in its early stages requiring only Chapter VI type peacekeeping and limited use of force. Regardless, every effort should be made by the UN and strong member nations to increase the capacity of fledgling regional organizations with financial aid and/or assistance of an advisory or training type nature. With time, training, experience, and monetary support from the UN, the US and other wealthy countries, nations and regional organizations will be better equipped for a broad range of peace operations.

As with contributing nations and the SAS, regional organizations are under no obligation to commit their forces in support of UN missions. Arguably however, regional forces would be likely to intervene and support troop deployment where a perceived national or regional interest exists.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the use of standby forces— from national sources or regional organizations— is preferred over standing up a UN force due to issues including financial constraints, legitimacy, and political will for intervention. There are however, several key recommendations on how to improve the availability and capabilities of standby forces.

First, the Standby Arrangement System needs to be modified to include not only individual Member State contributions, but contributions from regional organization as well. Additionally, the SAS must incorporate and enforce some type of binding agreement between contributing nations and regions for providing forces as agreed to in the MOU. This would help ensure forces are available to the UN when needed.

The SAS must also be revised to facilitate deployment of forces for Chapter VII operations. One course of action would be to develop a fifth level of the SAS structure for contributing nations to delineate those forces and assets that would be available for Chapter VII operations.[50]

There must also be some method of evaluating the readiness and proficiency of forces that have been allotted to the SAS. This would require a mobile training and evaluation team comprised of evaluators from credible military organizations, including other standby units such as SHIRBRIG. This evaluation would help insure not only proficiency, but would highlight any lacking resources prior to a deployment so as to remedy the situation prior to engaging in peace operations.

Support from the UN and Member states is critical to developing fledgling regional organizations to their highest potential. The international community should support and

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[50] Langille, "Bridging the Commitment-Capacity Gap," 3.

develop initiatives similar to President Bush's Global Peace Operations Initiative in an effort to develop a capable regional organization in Africa. Similarly, NATO's Partnership for Peace has been critical in developing common doctrine, interoperability and experience for nations that may or may not have aspirations of joining NATO and must be continued. These initiatives must be coordinated within a region, however, so as not to waste resources, but instead provide a well rounded, robust capability.

In summary, it is in the best interest of all nations to do their part towards attaining peace in their sphere of influence, and thus contribute to the overarching UN objective of maintaining international peace and stability. Furthermore, it is easier to keep the peace when there is a peace to be kept. This requires early diplomacy and preventative measures. Once a conflict has started, it is much more costly in terms of human life and resources to find a solution. Standby regional forces are the best way of providing early warning and preventative measures at a lower cost to the UN organization, and perhaps most importantly, they possess the political will to carry out a mission affecting only their national or regional interests.

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